



*News from Commissioner Jeffrey C. Riley & the
MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

On the Desktop - May 26, 2020

Update on Competency Determination Requirements for Classes of 2021-23

Dear Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, and Assistant Superintendents,

In light of the COVID-19 school closures this year, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted today to [modify the science and technology/engineering \(STE\) \(download\)](#) part of the [competency determination](#) requirement for current high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors (members of the classes of 2021-23). Under this change, the competency determination in STE will be awarded upon demonstration that the student earned credit for a course in the relevant subject matter and demonstrated competency in one of the four tested disciplines (biology, chemistry, introductory physics, technology/engineering) during their high school career. The process and timeline for awarding the modified CD will be announced at a later date.

Students in the classes of 2021–23 will still be able to qualify for the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship and the Stanley Z. Koplik Certificate of Mastery Award, which currently require students to earn certain test scores in all three subject areas (English language arts, mathematics, and STE). We are working with the Department of Higher Education to determine a fair approach to modifying the criteria for the scholarship programs and will announce those changes shortly.

Students in the class of 2024, who are in grade 8 this year and will enter grade 9 next year, are expected to participate in STE testing in 2021 or 2022, according to their school or district plan for high school STE testing.

Please note that today's decision affects only the high school STE tests. Members of the class of 2022 (this year's sophomores), will take the 10th grade English language arts and math MCAS tests during the 2020-21 school year.

Today's decision follows the Board's vote last month to modify the competency determination requirement for [members of the class of 2020 \(download\)](#). The April vote allowed the competency determination to be awarded to seniors based on successful completion of a relevant high school course in English language arts, math, and science and technology/engineering.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner